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1962/10/23

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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Action

Control:

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Rec'd:

October 23, 1962
8:59 p.m.

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FROM: Kingston

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: 804, October 23, 5 p.m.

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Initial Jamaican reaction to President's speech on Cuban crisis.

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Prime Minister went out of town this morning after telling press "no comment!". I called on Governor General, Deputy Prime Minister Sangster, Manley leader opposition. Press has not yet commented.

Governor General said in his private view this perhaps worst blow in history Jamaica. At very least tourism foreign investment will be seriously set back at key moment in island's history. Would not speculate about government's position. While inclined believe country will go along with Bustamante if latter retains forthright pro-US position, he not certain Manley will resist temptation play politics.

Sangster said Cabinet will meet tomorrow (Wednesday) morning to discuss situation. Like Governor General his initial reaction was also that present crisis would ruin coming tourist season and hurt prospects foreign investment. Beyond this he noted Jamaica's inexperience in foreign affairs but expected would go along with US. Thinks fear or retaliation might make public reluctant involve itself in direct support military action unless carried out under UN or OAS umbrella. He said this would require quick public education campaign.

Manley

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

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-2- 804, October 23, 1955 p.m., from Kingston

Manley leader opposition told me this morning he withholding comment until GOJ states position, but his tone expressed doubts about US position.

Small group from pro-communist "friends of Cuba committee" formed at noon today in front of Embassy with placards, handbills protesting US action. Were quickly dispersed by police.

Comment: Political leaders appear to be waiting for lead from UK, Commonwealth, or UN. They also trying to sense local reactions which as yet unformed except for anxiety at suddenly finding themselves hapless bystanders along front line.

CHESLAW

MEM

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